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IN MEMORY OF

SAMUEL COLLINGWOOD

FORTY-SIX YEARS PROCURATOR
OF THE UNIVERSITY PRESS
WHO DIED JAN 1 1841
IN THE 79TH YEAR
OF HIS AGE

ALSO OF MARY SECOND WIFE
OF THE ABOVE WHO DIED
FEB 6 1811 AGED
37 YEARS

ALSO OF MARY THIRD WIFE
OF THE ABOVE WHO DIED
DEC 1 1814 AGED
41 YEARS

ALSO OF SAMUEL BAKER SON OF
THE ABOVE WHO DIED
MAR 10 181[illegible]D
4 MON[illegible]

ALSO OF MARTH[illegible]UGHTER
OF THE ABOVE [illegible]DIED
DEC 11 182[illegible]
24 YEA[illegible]

ALSO OF JOSE[illegible]OF

CHRISTIAN CONFIDENCE.

A

SERMON,

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF

SAMUEL COLLINGWOOD, ESQ.

(Printer to the University of Oxford,)

AND DELIVERED

AT THE INDEPENDENT CHAPEL,

OXFORD,

ON SABBATH EVENING, JANUARY 10th, 1841.

BY ELIEZER JONES.

LONDON:

T. WARD & CO., PATERNOSTER ROW;

AND J. L. WHEELER, OXFORD.

1841.

931.

The writer can truly say that nothing but the urgent and repeated solicitations of friends should have induced him to make this discourse public. It was written at the extreme end of the week,—as, until the day of the funeral, (Friday,) a very different text had been selected, and, of course, an entirely distinct train of remarks meditated. He has long hesitated to send so hurried a composition before the public. Some alterations have been introduced therein since its delivery: the author cannot, however, do all he could wish to make it more meet for the reader's eye, without rendering it almost entirely new; and as he must not, in fairness, do that, it must even go forth with its imperfections on its head.

Oxford, March 4th, 1841.

A SERMON, &c.

2 TIMOTHY I. 12.

Nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

THE design of funeral discourses has been much misapprehended; and crowds have pressed to hear them from very questionable, if not unhallowed motives. No wonder, therefore, if great disappointment and dissatisfaction have followed; some insisting that too much was said in praise of the dead—others mortified because all that their fondness would have suggested was not proclaimed. The christian pulpit is not the place to flatter the pride or inflate the vanity of men; nor was the gospel entrusted to us to be employed in eulogising the virtues of fallen creatures, but to announce the rich grace of the blessed God. The dead have passed far beyond the reach of human applause or slander: the just and eternal Judge has passed irrevocable sentence upon them; and these discourses cannot, therefore, affect them. But the excellencies of their character, formed upon

the principles of the divine word, displaying his glory who is the Fountain of all goodness, and brought near to us in their walk and conversation as we mingled with them and were benefited by their counsels and prayers, may be profitably set before us ; especially, when their recent departure has softened and subdued our minds, and disposed us to receive instruction. Then may we hope to urge believers, with effect, to be "faithful unto death;" while deeper emphasis invests the admonition addressed to the ungodly, "Be ye also ready!"

Religion, as well as philosophy, has its experiments which demonstrate the truth and power and beauty of its doctrines, as they are seen embodied in the examples of those with whom we are familiar: these doctrines are thus rendered more operative and influential by being associated with our sensible ideas and our most interested feelings, with the additional advantage of being engraven indelibly on the memory. The divine law displays perfect righteousness; but the light of its majesty overpowers us, and "no man can approach unto it." When, however, we behold its reflected glory beaming in the life and actions of a good man, the lustre is mild and engaging. In the former, it is the dazzling splendour of the noon-tide sun ; in the latter, it is the same light producing the tints and diffusing the perfumes of every beauteous flower, and ripening into perfection every good fruit. Here the law of righteousness puts off its terrors, and appears in a train composed of all the ornaments and felicities of the human condition. So the "God of

glory appeared" on earth as a man. Divine perfections were clothed in our forms, and adapted themselves to our own circumstances; thus most impressively and effectually teaching us "what manner of persons we ought to be." "God was manifest in the flesh," exhibiting his nature by our sensations and emotions; feeling and acting as he would wish men to do.

I have the relief and consolation of knowing, in the present instance, that nothing I might say of that revered individual whose decease we are assembled this evening to improve, could exceed his merits in your estimation; while, at the same time, far short as my observations will assuredly fall of his real worth, I am comforted by the reflection that I shall follow the instructions of his bereaved family by abstaining from encomium, except as may be necessary for the honour of that sovereign grace which made him what he was. Had I been privileged to receive his last advice, to hear the last sentence of wisdom and humility which dropped from his lips, I know full well how he would have charged me only to "glorify God in him." I should have found him still speaking of himself as an "unprofitable servant, having done only that which it was his duty to do;"—still aiming to "win Christ and to be found in him." In this sacred place, we dare propose to ourselves no other object. Our theme and employ in the sanctuary are the sublimest that can occupy mortal minds. "God forbid that we should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The attempt, indeed, to delineate the character of that most estimable man would, on my part, be vain; and though I could place it before you with ever so much exactness and fidelity, it would be unnecessary. My acquaintance with him was of so short a date,—and that only when he had been compelled to retire from active duties, and was seen but in circumstances of much weakness and decline,—that it is in my power only to picture to my imagination what he must have been in the zenith of his life and energies. This I know—that I never saw him without being charmed with the beauty and loveliness of religion, as it appeared in him, expressed in that sweet smile that ever played around his mouth and irradiated his cheerful and venerable face. His speech was the "meekness of wisdom," grave without being austere, pleasant and lively without an approach to trifling.—But you know his "manner of life" among you; the weight of his character, the worth of his counsels, the benevolence of his heart; his humility, his unswerving integrity, his child-like simplicity, and transparency of disposition. I need not tell *you* of his devotedness to the cause of Christ; his noble generosity towards the interests of religion; or of his attachment to the "house of his God." To the very last, his anxiety was deep and unabated with respect to the prosperity of Zion in general,—and of this portion of it, with which he was, from its origin, so closely connected, in particular. I need not remind you of what he was in prayer, or in the exposition of that one book he prized above all others,—the volume of everlasting truth. I

need not tell you of his visits to the sick, the dying, and the poor; of his liberal and extensive charities among them, so systematically, yet unostentatiously, nay, secretly bestowed and continued,—so that he might have adopted, almost literally, the declaration of Job, "When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me; because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor; and the cause which I knew not, I searched out." All these you know better than I. This whole city attests the preciousness of such a man. Never was testimony more cordially given—given from all quarters. Never man went down to his grave more sincerely or universally beloved.

But these things are not the subjects of my discourse to-night. I have matters still more important in hand. I am not to speak *of him*, excellent and amiable as he was; but *to you!* Let "the living lay it to his heart." "He, being dead, yet speaketh,"—speaks to us from the sepulchre, in deeper and more persuasive tones than ever did his living voice.

I have selected the passage which has been read as the basis of a few observations with a view to show the NATURE and VALUE of TRUE RELIGION, as expressed so simply and touchingly by the Apostle with refer-

ence to himself, and exemplified in the triumphant emotions with which he anticipated the solemn future. It was just the same principle of *trust in our Lord Jesus*, and yielding of the soul to his care, that made our lamented friend what he was in his life—the humble, holy, devoted, useful, benevolent, and cheerful christian ; and that, in his last moments, cheered and upheld his departing spirit, and enabled him so tranquilly to glide away—sweetly to dissolve, I might almost say, into the cloudless glory of that state for which he was so eminently meetened.

Let us attend,—

I. To the nature of real Religion.

Religion signifies the restoration, the re-union of the soul to God ;—recovery to the divine favour, restoration to the friendship of God. On account of the apostasy of mankind from their Creator and Sovereign, the unexcepted hatred of every human heart towards him, and the universal revolt of our race from his righteous authority, such a restoration and re-establishment of amicable terms between us is, evidently, necessary to our safety and welfare. Inasmuch as the supreme Governor cannot compromise his law by submitting to our terms, reconciliation can be effected only by our return and submission to him. Jesus Christ is God clothed in our nature and possessing our sympathies ; bearing in his own body the desert of our sins ; so, by acts of boundless kindness, evincing the depth and strength of his affection for

us, after all our hatred of him; and inviting us to himself as our Friend, Deliverer, and King. The religion of our fallen world is, therefore, not gratitude merely for benefits received, as creatures,—but obedience and submission to an offended God, springing from love to him, because, notwithstanding our crimes, He has infinitely loved us.

This, in the scriptures of the New Testament, is described as "believing in the Lord Jesus Christ that we may be saved." This very *believing* or *trusting* the apostle tells us he had practised, and refers to it as securing to him the indiscerptible joy and courage, that, at this moment, filled his breast.

1. His confidence was based on his knowledge of Christ's ability and grace: "*I know whom I have believed;*" by which we may understand him to express his fullest and firmest conviction of the exact suitability of the Saviour's person and work to his case, as a helpless sinner; the complete sufficiency of the Redeemer's undertaking on his behalf; and his absolute fidelity to all his promises. Such an assurance as to the qualification of the Saviour is essential to the reality and vigour of our faith. In the prospect of an endless state of bliss or woe, according to our present preparation for either, it would be madness to trust one whom we did not know,—to commit the custody of our entire property to a perfect stranger. In order, therefore, "to believe to everlasting life," there must be the knowledge of him on whom we are invited to place our reliance. Now,

"faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God;" that is, the true and faithful God bears ample testimony in his word to the ability, readiness, and right of Jesus Christ to rescue from eternal wrath every sinner that looks to him; whoever, receiving this testimony, acts upon it and entrusts his immortal interests to the hands of the Redeemer, shall be saved.

The more intimate and perfect our knowledge, the more implicit and unwavering will be our dependence upon Christ. Therefore we hear the apostle Paul, to the very last, wishing for himself that he might "know" more of "him;" while St. Peter exhorts us to "*grow* in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord."

The confidence avowed in the text was the result of long experience. "He that believeth hath the witness in himself." He had trusted the declarations of the divine word; and came, seeking escape from that impending wrath, of his liability to which he had become painfully yet mercifully conscious, to the Lord Jesus; relied upon him; found all his desires realized, his conscience at peace, his heart and mind delivered from unholy and unhappy feelings, his character exalted and purified, and all his powers impelled, by an inexpressibly delightful sense of obligation to his Lord and Saviour, to advance the welfare of others: years had now passed, confirming, as they rolled, the substantiality of his hopes, invigorating every principle of attachment, and inspiring him with the most transporting joy in his long-tried Friend.

Need I remind those who knew our venerated brother, how true all this was as to his experience? I can bear testimony, as to his latter days at least, that no theme was so dear to his heart, so lighted up his eye with the glow of ecstacy, or dwelt so lingeringly on his lips, as that which directly related to the Saviour he so long loved and served,—and never loved so well as when he gently fell into his arms and woke in heaven.

2. Again ;—the Apostle refers, in a very striking manner, to certain transactions which had taken place between him and his Saviour;—namely, that he had committed to him a deposit, and that his Lord had received it to keep it. The knowledge obtained, from the infallible Testimony, of the power and faithfulness of Christ, prompts to a full and perfect surrender of the soul into his hands. "*I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him.*"

How solemn and important such an act! Driven from every other refuge, convinced of the inadequacy of all other aid, and alarmed at his shelterless and perilous condition, as exposed to the vengeance of his affronted Maker and Governor, the penitent hastens to Christ, directed thither by the voice of the gospel. Encouraged by the many assurances therein given of the willingness of Jesus to receive all such as thus flee to himself, he makes an entire and grateful commitment of his immortal spirit to the Redeemer's care. He trusts him with his all. Here true religion

begins. Those who are strangers to this voluntary and deliberate act of confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ, are ignorant of their real state, and certainly destitute of scriptural piety. They "neglect the great salvation;" they reject the only Saviour; "the wrath of God abideth on them;" and should death so find them, they must inevitably suffer the doom pronounced on them that obey not the Gospel,—"they shall be turned into hell!"

The language of the text shews, moreover, that genuine religion is a matter accomplished prior to the hour of dissolution and departure. The Apostle speaks of the placing of his dearest treasure,—his everlasting welfare, in the charge of Christ, as something done before this. He was too wise and practical a man, and vastly too much in earnest about his soul, to postpone so important a business to the final hour. He knew too well that his death might be sudden; and he therefore resolved to be ever prepared and fore-armed against it, let the summons come when and in what shape it might. Brethren! religion is an infinitely greater concern than the presentation to our Supreme Proprietor and Judge of just the last hour or days of our mortal life; offering to Him the remains of strength and time so poor that satan and the world scorn to retain them! Has such a wretch any right to calculate that his insulted Author will then receive him? I confess to you, that my belief in the virtue or sincerity of death-bed repentances is the slightest possible, and next to none at all. Such a deed as that described in our text is of too deliberate

and serious a nature to be effected just amidst the perturbation and agony of dying. "Believing to the salvation of the soul" is not the mere ejaculation of a hurried prayer for mercy, or a struggling essay to trust in Christ, when the king of terrors presents himself, and bids his trembling victim follow him. Religion is an affair for *life;* and that you may ensure its supports and comforts when you die, you must know it, and practise it, and taste of its sweetness while you live! Faith is not a solitary act; it is an habitual exercise. It is repeated every day with increased complacency and delight. Hence, it is explained in scripture by "*coming*" and "*looking* unto Jesus,"*—words intending continuous action. Our apostle too presents it in the same light when he says, "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." This was the pious sentiment which the Psalmist cherished in his inmost soul, and throughout his eventful history, and to which he gave utterance in those memorable words, "Into thy hands I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed it, O Lord God of truth!" And when, using the like expression, the martyr Stephen exclaimed as he expired, "Lord Jesus! into thy hands I commend my spirit," he only solemnly and under the most momentous circumstances reiterated what had often occurred before in the secrecy of retired devotion.

What else can prove a substantial and abiding

* 1 Peter ii. 4. Heb. xii. 2.

solace during our present existence, or animate and sustain us on the threshold of another world? The soul is infinitely precious; but it is in danger of perishing for ever! We stand charged before God with the highest offences against his Majesty and Government,—treason, ingratitude and rebellion, hatred of his person, and resistance to his claims and commands. Our own conscience is a witness against us! What can we do? Whither shall we fly? What can we allege in arrest of judgment? What shall satisfy such a Claimant, or propitiate his anger, or hide our faults? Can any man feel either happy or safe while "the God in whose hand his breath is," has such evils to lay to his charge, and he can put in no available plea? Is death a welcome subject, or can it be actually encountered in peace, while the soul lies all exposed to the fearful and tremendous consequences of its own unrepealed and unmitigated crimes? Oh! what agony is that which fills the mind that has been awakened to a sense of its awful condition in relation to these things! "Men and brethren! what shall we do?" was the simultaneous cry of three thousand bursting, bleeding hearts, that had been penetrated with a conviction of their guilt and danger. And there is no reply that can impart rest or satisfaction to a wounded spirit, but such as was returned on that and similar occasions,—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." The smitten sinner can enjoy no tranquillity until he has resigned his eternal salvation to him who said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give

you rest!" A discovery of Christ as "able to save to the uttermost," as answering every demand of justice and law on his behalf, and as successfully pleading his cause with the Father, by the intervention of his own deeds and sufferings, whereby "he magnified the law and made it honourable," instantly removes all his anxiety and terror, and produces unutterable joy. This is the first and last act of Christian faith, —to rest upon Christ. That repose will confer solid happiness while we live, and the exultation of a conqueror when we die.

3. This act of betrusting the soul to the Lord Jesus is specially anticipative of that august yet awful period, when this world's affairs shall be wound up, and every man's true character be publicly declared, and his everlasting state unalterably fixed. "*I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.*"

THAT DAY stands forth with majestic prominence in the sacred volume. What impressive grandeur clothes our Lord's description of it! With what solemn weight it seems to have been present to the apostle's imagination and hope! The reality, importance, and value of all the objects of faith shall then be revealed in glorious light. The pomp and glare of earthly attractions shall have passed away; the proud titles and flatteries heaped upon men be forgotten, or remembered only with vexation and disgust; all self-sufficiency be felt to be worse than vain; conscience be denuded and awake; and no-

thing remain but the essential human being, stripped of every distinction but that of character!

Behold the Judge descend and plant his radiant throne upon the sky! The nations are cited to his tribunal! "The books are opened," and every beating heart responds to those records, while the eternal destiny of each depends upon what is written there. What an assembly is that! how vast and diversified!—composed of men and angels, the righteous and the wicked. Yet how distinct! classified and separated with the utmost ease, each instinctively finding his own place and "standing in his lot." What hope can there be of concealment beneath the searching brightness of that eye whose piercing glance discovers, at once, the depths of the soul? The judgment of the world is delegated to him who once appeared for its redemption; and now, he comes, according to his promise, "to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe;" but also "to take vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." To the hearers thereof, that gospel itself shall be the rule of judgment. "He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.—And this is the will of him that hath sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."* This

* John xii. 48; vi. 29, 40.

will, therefore, constitute the crisis of our fate. Our trust in Christ, or rejection of him, must determine our eternal state in "that day." With what fearful reason will thousands, horror-struck, then desire to "hide themselves from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb!" But no dismay nor confusion shall seize the believer. He lifts up his head with joy. His soul is safe! He now receives the ineffable reward of his faith and patience and hope. The universe applauds the choice he has made; heaven rejoices over him with singing; and the eye of his Master rests upon him with approbation and delight! In the Judge he beholds his Friend, with whom his dearest communings have been maintained, and to whose protection and service he had renounced his all. Well may such a man hail with rapture "that day," which shall seal to him for ever the possession of the inheritance of the sons of God; while, even now, his chief pleasures spring from his anticipation of "that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God his Saviour!"

O how blessed is it, when death approaches, to have "our life,"—our most valuable interests, in higher keeping than our own! Let him strike!—the soul, already sped at its Saviour's beckoning, leaves behind it only dust, which it shook from its etherial wings when it rose, and now looks down to smile at the impotence of its last enemy. How blessed, on "that day," to find our deposit, brilliant

and sparkling, among the "jewels" then "made up" and fitted to adorn the Mediator's crown!

These remarks conduct us,

II. To the illustration which the text furnishes of *the advantageousness and value of the religion of the gospel.*

The language of the Apostle glows with a lofty enthusiasm. He seems to have realized most largely, at this moment, the spirit of his calling, as having been "set for the defence of the gospel." He was now a sufferer for its sake:—but, lest it should be imagined that the gospel or its Author was to blame for this, or that he had experienced the slightest disappointment in reference to the confidence he had cherished, or that he deemed the friendship of Christ too dearly purchased at the cost of such labours, privations, indignities and cruelties as he had undergone, or might yet endure, he instantly adds, "Nevertheless I am not ashamed." No stronger evidence could be given of the high and unbroken estimate he had formed of its worth. His reflections on the past and his expectations in the future, by it, were rendered serene, buoyant, and "full of glory." Whether we judge of their value intrinsically, or bring them into comparison with whatever is highly esteemed among men, the gospel of Christ and the blessings it conveys are beyond all price!

1. Its value appears in the fact that it ministers to

its possessor a consciousness of rectitude and honour under the pressure of every adverse and trying event. —"*I am not ashamed!*"

Our apostle stands forth an illustrious witness and monument of the truth of the gospel. His was not a mind to receive credulously any novel views;—much less such as contradicted all his earliest prejudices, most rooted habits, and choicest welfare. In the heart of Saul of Tarsus, all the influences that form the character and control the destiny of men combined to strengthen and mature his enmity against Jesus of Nazareth. His learning, his conscientious virtue and integrity, his attachment to his nation and its religion, his high and growing reputation,—all united to render his unbelief, as it should seem, impregnable. Notwithstanding, the light of heavenly truth penetrated even into his mind, filled it entirely, and left not the shadow of a doubt. Having once embraced the "truth as it is in Jesus," he immediately proclaimed it to others, openly and every where; travelled far and wide for the purpose; never rested nor tired in his work; encountered all manner of toil and sacrifice and reproach on its account; and at the time he penned this epistle, was looking forward to a barbarous death as the final reward, on earth, of his stedfastness and zeal. Yet, while reviewing his painful and arduous course,—his loss of all things, and amidst all his forebodings with regard to his remaining history,—he clasps and presses to his bosom, as dearer than ever, "the glorious gospel of the blessed God." It was not that his understanding and judg-

ment alone were satisfied,—his heart rested joyously on its power to impart the richest consolation. It shed upon him the mild and mellow lustre of the summer's setting sun.

Age, like his, hallowed and truly dignified, is a beautiful and instructive picture. When increasing years have served to accumulate the internal and experimental evidences of christianity in the light it has poured on the mind, the ennobling influence it has exerted on the character, the blessed and peaceful fruits it has produced in the life, the constancy and unabated attachment to itself it has nourished,—then do "days speak" to purpose, "and multitude of years teach wisdom." Here, again, you are at once reminded of that venerable saint who has lately left us.

"Such an one as Paul the aged" evinces his love to his Master by "continuing in his word." Some, that with much apparent devotion, had set out in the race, had given up and returned; but he "held on his way and waxed stronger and stronger." Five of the "virgins," in the parable, "took their lamps, but took no oil with them!" Alas! how many such there are!—their light goes out in death, if not before! They will converse about religion, mingle with Christ's disciples, and say, "Lord, we will follow thee wheresoever thou goest:" 'and they follow him when he rides in triumph to Jerusalem; they follow him to the temple; they follow him to the upper room where he kept the passover; they follow him to the mount of Olives; they follow him to the garden, though

they have no fellowship with him in his sufferings there, for while he is in an agony, they are fast asleep;—but, when he would have them go with him to Golgotha, they "turn back and walk no more with him.'" What a relief to turn from such to the veteran apostle! Having survived persecutions of no ordinary kind,—borne shame, proscription, scourging, imprisonment,—braved agony and distress, in a thousand forms,—still wearing the prisoner's chain, and now waiting the miscreant's death,—in spite of all, he avows his unyielding admiration of the cause for which he has suffered, and is ready to lay down his life in proof of the honesty and ardour with which his convictions are held.

Let such a man be thrust into the innermost dungeon,—even at midnight, his bounding joy will banish sleep and change his very prison into the vestibule of heaven, irradiated with the glory of the divine presence, and filled with celestial music. Bring such men before kings and councils; threaten, ridicule, beat them;—they will "depart, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ." The hearts of such are in heaven; they are insensible alike to the splendours and terrors of this lower world. They live but for one object,—the honour of their Saviour; and, to accomplish this, neither flood nor flame can oppose to them impassable barriers. They stand composed and dauntless against the combined assaults of violence and slander, and every one of them can say, "None of these things move me!" Oh! whither has this noble, daring,

successful spirit fled? How small a degree of this moral heroism can we now discern among the professed followers of the Son of God! How little serves to baffle our energies and fill us with alarm! And why is this,—but because we do not cherish the same implicit and unwavering trust in the power and faithfulness of Him, who has engaged that none of his servants shall go unattended by his strength nor unrewarded by his grace? Why, but because we do not sufficiently fill our minds with the evidences of the truth and grandeur of our cause;—because we "seek rather the honour that cometh from men than that which cometh from God only?"

Let us learn to make the glory of God our daily business and care. Let us cultivate a large acquaintance with the gospel, by the appointed means of reading, hearing and meditation, and make experiment of its doctrines on our practice. While treasuring up truth, let us seek after active holiness. Thus let all the knowledge obtained be wrought into our very souls, and exert a sanctifying and consoling power over our consciences, our passions, and our lives. Divine truth, thus converted into spiritual nourishment, would impart a vital strength both for service and suffering.

2. The value of evangelical faith is proved by the high and solid ground which it enables the believer to occupy in respect to a future world: it imparts a calm and settled certainty of his title to "the inheritance of the saints in light." "*I know—I am persuaded.*"

This was no uncommon strain of sentiment or language among primitive christians; "they took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves that they had in heaven a better and an enduring substance." The apostles, in various parts of their writings, express themselves with the most unhesitating confidence, in relation to their eternal state; and that not as apostles, but as "partakers of the like precious faith;" neither with regard to themselves alone, but in the name of their brethren: "*We* know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Nor is this divine assurance of our immortal felicity the peculiar endowment of any age of the church. It is the fruit of simple faith,—of absolute and implicit trust in the veracity and power of Christ. It is the voice of the Spirit of Christ in the believer, "witnessing with his own spirit, that he is a child of God; and if a child, an heir; an heir of God, and joint-heir with Christ." It is as far removed, on the one hand, from the presumption and arrogance which some conceited, ignorant, and censorious men display, as, on the other, from the doubt, despondency, and dread, which some unquestionably pious individuals exhibit. In many cases, it is to be feared, the latter qualities are mistaken for humility. There are the "weak in faith," —"babes in Christ," among whom we could not look for the assurance we speak of, inasmuch as the remains of unbelief, and the want of mature knowledge of divine truth, must, necessarily, prevent the enjoy-

ment of it. It must be acknowledged, moreover, that the instances are lamentably numerous among professing christians, in which this blessed experience has never been possessed: but then, except when physical causes operate, the reason why they, whose faith and consequent safety we dare not deny, "are all their life-time subject to bondage," plainly is, that they have not cultivated and nourished that faith, being careful to *grow* therein; they have kept it in a dwarfish and sickly condition, just having existence and nothing more; it has not been regularly fed from the word of God, nor exercised in appropriate duties; the world has been permitted to overshadow and stunt it. But, wherever this divine principle of faith has been allowed to expand and increase, to put on a healthy glow and attain its manhood, it has elevated its subject above the tyranny and detrimental effects of fear, and imparted a robustness, energy, and courage which could neither be crushed nor impaired. "We know that we have passed from death unto life;" we are conscious that we love God and delight to obey him;—which are so many sources of pure and exalted happiness. Every motion of spiritual life, every feeling of love, every act of obedience, is accomplished with a double joy. The exercises of spiritual life are in themselves pleasurable; an obedience prompted by love is itself joyous; —but each spiritual affection, and each act of holy obedience, is new and confirmatory evidence that, though once afar off, we are made nigh by the blood of Christ;" that though once strangers and foreigners,

we are now fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." "Great peace have they which love thy law, and nothing shall offend them." "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee."

As it is in the last hour that the peaceful influence of our assured interest in the Redeemer may be considered most desirable and necessary, so then also it is most decided. Sometimes its effect is rapture and ecstacy;—but always, at the least, serenity and hope, well becoming one who feels that "God is the strength of his heart, and his portion for ever." Such was the spirit of tranquil retrospection and triumphant confidence with which the apostle now awaited his dismissal from the scene of his toils and conflicts: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand: I have fought a good faith, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing."

3. The value of the gospel appears from the exalted association with the Son of God, to which it introduces us; and the inviolability and efficacy of his friendship, of which it assures us.

The apostle was confident that the trust he reposed in his almighty Friend would not be overthrown. He felt not only that his deposit would be forthcoming, with honour, in the last day, but that in the mean

time he should be preserved, sustained and cheered, in every season of difficulty and danger. He knew that he should not be forsaken in any hour of need; that "as his day, his strength should be;" and that, whether by life or death, he should be enabled to glorify him, who, by such a miracle of grace, had called him to his service.

It is this full persuasion of the constancy and perpetuity of the objects of our faith that alone can raise the mind above the oppressive influences of our condition in this world. The apostle had repeated occasion to complain of the defection of cowardly brethren, the apostacy of once zealous professors, and that he was thus left almost single-handed, to encounter the world in arms; but, like David going forth against Goliath, his conviction of the fidelity and ever-present aid of the Lord his God emboldened him, nerved his arm, and caused him alway to triumph. When we fall under the various afflictions of this mortal life, how consoling is the remembrance that all our concerns are in the hands of "a merciful and faithful High Priest," who himself suffered in the flesh, that he might be "able to succour them that are tempted!" When the tumults of sorrow gather together, and "deep calleth unto deep," we may find many an hour of sweetest calm in committing ourselves to that Jesus who can hush the waves and the storm, saying, "Peace, be still!" In those moments of fiery trial, when satan employs all his stratagems and rages against us with his utmost fury, the only refuge is his atonement and advocacy, who "led

captivity captive," and is mightier than all they that are against us. How many and oft-recurring are the circumstances whose aspect is dark and threatening, in which all hope must expire, but that, which, like an anchor, grapples the very basis of the covenant that is more lasting than the hills! "All things work together for good to them that love God." The protection of Jesus is never withdrawn; his people he never abandons. From the moment they relinquished all for him, he bound himself to be their guardian, companion, and guide. They have free access to his infinite stores: if there exist any help or comfort in the universe, he will command it for their benefit; and if there be none, he will create it.

The interests of the believer are identified with those of Christ, whose nature and honour are, therefore, pledged to ensure the safety and happiness of his faithful servants. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." It is one of the offices of christian faith to rid the soul of all personal anxiety, and to render it "careful for nothing" but the right discharge of its obligations to God. The guilt of sin is removed; the heart is conscious to itself of loving God, and of being loved by him; the promises of the divine word meet every emergency; and therefore, though the christian may appear as "having nothing," he in reality "possesses all things." He has food to eat the world knows not of. His earthly inheritance is "the peace of God,

which passeth all understanding." He can lay his hand on heaven, and call it his own:—his home is there. Yea, "*all things* are his; whether the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come!"

Let me ask you, my hearers, of what else, in the whole circle of human ambition and pursuit, can it be affirmed that it is worthy of the mind and of the energies which it employs and exhausts;—that it retains its attractions in the hour of adversity;—that it appears, as in bold relief, most beautiful, when we suffer on its account;—that it rewards its adherent with the assurance of final glory;—that it enables him to exclaim, amidst taunts and reproaches, not with the fitful gust of passion, but with the meekness and mien of an angel, "I am not ashamed;"—and, that it leads right up to the throne of God to receive an immortal crown? Compared with this, what can philosophy or wealth or fame procure for their votaries? What, besides the hope inspired and sustained by the gospel, can abide the ordeal of death? What can avail us in "that day," when the earth shall vanish away, and the heavens be wrapped together as a scroll, except the friendship of the mighty Arbiter of our destinies? *That* will be glory indeed,—for the certain enjoyment of which, we might proudly bear the vengeance of earth and hell!

We draw towards conclusion by a few observations.

1. You must have remarked in the language of the inspired apostle,—the language of calm delibera-

tion, though penned under the most awful circumstances in which mortal could stand,—that he describes religion as *a personal matter* between himself and his Saviour; a transaction of a secret and solemn kind, in which the only parties are God and himself.

The ground of his confidence, as to the eternity before him, was not an opinion merely; it was neither frame nor feeling, but an *act*,—an act of the mind and heart, arising from a sense of his need of just such a Saviour as was the Lord Christ, and from his assurance, resting on divine testimony, that Christ would receive him.

This was the religion of the apostle Paul; and this was the *sum* and *substance* of his religion. On this he rested for eternity! Where is there anything about rites or forms of the church which he had observed? where anything about the efficacy of the sacraments? where, as to his baptism and its regenerative effects? Does such a man turn now to the mummeries of 'extreme unction,' or reverently put a cross to his lips? Are *these* his modes of preparing for his appearance before his Judge? I hear him, indeed, speak of his dependence once upon such things; but, it was in the days of his blindness, when he was a malignant persecutor of Christ in the persons of his followers. A religion made up of external sanctity might easily enough consist with all the deep and awful wickedness that lay rankling in his heart. But no sooner did he discover the worse than worthlessness of this,—the truly horrible nature of that

state in which he stood among the foremost of the boastful and sanctimonious Pharisees, than we hear him cry, "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."

The religion of the Bible,—that in the practice and hope of which died triumphant patriarchs and prophets, apostles and martyrs, the faithful and the pious of every age,—is one of *the heart*;—the heart given up to Christ to be cleansed, and fitted for glory, by his blood and the Spirit of his grace. It is a personal and decided surrender of himself on the part of a penitent and believing sinner. Nothing short of this can entitle or prepare us to see God. If you suppose that a mere round of moral observances or ecclesiastical ceremonies—if you suppose that attendance ever so regular at a place of worship—if you suppose that sacraments, which are but *signs* and *outward things*, and immediately affect the body alone, by what hands soever administered—if you suppose that any or all of these constitute *religion*,—I tell you that you search in vain in the book of the kingdom of God for such a religion. It was not the religion of Abraham, or David, or Isaiah, or Peter, or John, or Paul. And I do now warn you, in the name of the Lord,

that if this be all your religion, you are yet "in the gall of bitterness, and in the bonds of iniquity;"—it is utterly impossible that heaven should receive one so ill-suited to engage in its worship, or mingle in its society!

2. Again, I remark,—that the text plainly shews that pure religion is not *a thing of sects or parties* only; it is, as we have seen, a matter between the conscience and God. It is neither *form* on the one hand, nor *sentiment* on the other. It is *trust in Christ;* the same everywhere. It is independent of, and infinitely superior to all ecclesiastical constitution and order. It may consist with every variety of church government, and every diversity of opinion on many doctrinal points. It is found in the Jew, who is looking with tearful and anxious eye for his Messiah; but who has had no opportunity of hearing the story of that wondrous child that was born in Bethlehem. It is found in the devout Catholic, though covered by the smoke of his incense and by the trappings of his gorgeous rites. It is found among Protestants of sundry names and creeds. Though divided, and scowling unnaturally upon each other, they are brethren; born of the same righteous Father, nurtured and comforted by the same loving Spirit! They are *one* amidst all their differences,—debtors to the same atoning blood, "partakers of one bread and of one cup," having drank of the same spiritual Rock. And this essential principle of their new nature shall survive their mutual imperfections,

and unite them above in affection, and service, and bliss, visibly and without end!

Union to Christ, by faith and love, is *the only mark of the true church*; "the foundation of the apostles and prophets." There can be no true church where this is wanting; but where there is this, whatever else there is not, there is the temple and home of the living God! All external forms, whether of government or ritual, are but means to an end;—valuable only as they conduce to an acquaintance with the truths of the gospel, lead the soul to Christ, and keep it in fellowship with him: and that order of means, by which these are most directly and effectually accomplished, bears the clearest marks of divine original and authority. Alas! that men professing the religion of the meek and holy Jesus should have departed, so grievously, from this great and comprehensive principle. Our now sainted friend was accustomed to allude to this exclusive spirit, with pungent grief:—by this time, possibly, he understands why such dissensions are permitted among the people of God, and what their end will be!

God forbid that we should ever erect a standard of our own as the term of salvation, and denounce and anathematize all that walk not with us! I should be afraid or ashamed to own myself a man, much more a *christian*, if I dared to close the gate of Christ's church against my brother, of whose faith in the Saviour I had indisputable proof, only because he did not subscribe to my creed, or adopt my calendar, or pronounce my shibboleth.

Who, that knew him, could be in doubt of the piety of our departed friend? Was it not clear as the light of the day, and refreshing as the southern breeze? Where is there one in this city who would question his present bliss or eminent standing in the kingdom of heaven? Shall I be told that he was not a member of a particular section of the great christian family claiming to be *alone apostolical*, and that he must, therefore, be committed 'to the uncovenanted mercies of God?' If then, indeed, the way to the church in heaven lies only through a special church on earth, and is peculiar to *that* church on account of its *constitution* rather than its *spirit* or its *doctrine*,—I am forced to conclude that the New Testament is not a safe guide; it is incomplete; nay, it misleads; it lays down no such condition as the objection pleads for, but broadly and absolutely affirms that "*whosoever believeth* shall be saved." Yes, verily, I am compelled to doubt the safety of the apostle himself: the confession he made, in the text and elsewhere, in the immediate prospect of his dissolution, and when he knew that millions upon millions of his fellow-immortals would peruse his epistle, was not explicit,—"it is weighed in the balance and found wanting!"—And are we brought to this?—Dissenter as I am, if my dissent demanded that I should so judge those who are not of my communion, I would instantly tear it off and hurl it from me; I would trample it under my foot as the most loathsome and base of all abominations; I would cast it away as a venomous reptile that had crept into the cup of my faith.

O thou servant of the Most High! faithful, laborious, happy man! who, after all thy trials, art now waiting thy triumphant dismissal, and waiting it at thy Master's cross, on which thy enraptured eye is fixed,—let me die as thou art dying; and, in whatever part of thy wide-spread church it be,—I ask no more.

In conclusion—Let not the departure of our friend leave us uninstructed, unimproved. "Be ye followers of them, who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises."

Let the bereaved family, more especially, cherish the pious remembrance of their dear and honoured relative. Let them seek his God and Saviour. Let them tread in his footsteps. Let them certainly meet him in glory. May a double portion of those celestial influences, by which he was distinguished, rest upon them, to sanctify, to ennoble, to console!

The event has a voice to this church. Your friend, your father is gone! We look at each other and ask, Where shall we meet such another? "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" Blessed, cheering thought, He ever lives! Buckle on your armour anew, and go forth, each ready to sacrifice time, energy, and life to the honour of the gospel!

Every one present now is summoned to the grave to hear the sacred admonitions there enforced! "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace!" "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain!"

Have any among you hitherto despised serious religion, deemed its very name a mockery, or lavished upon a profession of godliness your bitterest sarcasms, denominating it cant, enthusiasm, and hypocrisy? Recollect—you have known at least one man, who was a professor of religion, and *you* even must allow that he was no hypocrite. You have seen, in this instance at least, that there is such a thing as genuine, cheerful, useful, honorable piety; and which, therefore, by all that is rational, advantageous, and solemn, you are bound to secure for yourselves!

Brethren! ponder this one inquiry—into whose keeping have you committed your undying souls? Are they safe? Are they where you would have them be at death, and in the judgment? They *are* committed to *him whom you serve,* whether he be the god of this world,—or that great messenger of infinite love, who "came to seek and to save them that were lost!" O! hasten to the only Refuge, ye who are yet without Christ! Escape for your life, lest, while you loiter, wrath overtake you to the uttermost!

Finally;—all around us is mutable and passing away! Who would live here for ever? Heaven is enriched with the spoils of earth, and every thing good and fair is soon transplanted thither. There all that is magnificent is imperishable, all that is lovely blooms without decay! Our loved ones are there! One band after another of those in whose virtues and affection we have solaced ourselves is leaving our mortal shores to colonize that "better country."

The great, the noble, and the good of the whole universe are there! It is the region of absolute and eternal perfection,—the central abode of ineffable glory. Jesus is there, with all dominion and power at his command, and making his servants as happy as himself! Therefore, it is heaven! Let that bright and blissful world engage more of our thoughts! Let us be sure that we tread the path which conducts thither; and from that path, narrow and rugged for a while though it may be, let us never stray. As often as death breaks up the integrity of our present circles, we shall feel that he is but adding to the attractions of that society, which, beyond that dark and mysterious limit, awaits our coming; and when our opportunity arrives, gladly we will emerge from this state of shadows and of gloom into the divine manifestation of unveiled truth and reality!

WILLIAM EVANS, PRINTER, GUILDHALL-SQUARE, CARMARTHEN.